

I claim:

1. A picking rake comprising:

- a) a first rake unit comprising a first rake head and a first rake handle,
- b) a second rake unit comprising a second rake head and a second rake handle,
- c) wherein said first rake head has a first face,
- d) wherein said second rake head has a second face,
- e) means 1 to temporarily hold together said first rake unit and said second rake unit such that the distal ends of said first rake head and said second rake head are substantially aligned for raking purposes,

whereby a functional rake made up of two units can provide a wider raking span in the raking mode, and whereby when the two rake units are detached from each other, each can be used independently as a rake, or if used together, both become a very efficient tool for picking up material, and whereby the user of the picking rake is able to work more efficiently and with less fatigue because he or she is able to easily shift from raking to picking and vice versa without having to change tools each time.

2. The picking rake in claim 1 further including

- a) means 2 to hold said first rake handle to said second rake handle towards the proximal end of one of the handles,
- b) wherein said means 2 allows at least one of said first rake unit and said second rake unit to turn such that said first face and said second face can be substantially facing each other,
- c) wherein said means 2 further allows said substantially facing said first face and said second face to withdraw from each other outwardly and approach each other inwardly.

3. The picking rake in claim 2 wherein said means 2 is selected from a group comprising

- a) knot, chain, or similar flexible elongated material that is threaded through apertures on each of said first rake handle and second rake handle and secured at each end with a lump,

- b) at least two interlocking rings the ends of which are secured to apertures on each of said first rake handle and said second rake handle,
 - c) a ring and aperture for one of the rake handles and a freely turning ring retained on the other rake handle, both rings joined together,
 - d) a screw eye for each handle and a ring joining them both,
 - e) a large ring threaded through both apertures on both rake handles,
- whereby the above means 2 comprise of articles that are readily available, inexpensive, and easily repairable and replaceable by an ordinary consumer.

- 4. The picking rake in claim 1 further including at least one handling member on each of the rake handles whereby the user can comfortably hold said picking rake when raking and picking material.
- 5. The picking rake in claim 4 wherein at least one said handling member is movable and fixable along the length of either of said first rake unit or said second rake unit by some means, whereby one picking rake can be adapted to users of different height and arm reach.
- 6. The picking rake in claim 4 wherein at least one rake handle is adjustable in length by some means.
- 7. The picking rake in claim 4 wherein at least one rake handle is adjustable in length and wherein at least one handling member is movable and fixable along the length of at least one of the rake handles.
- 8. The picking rake in claim 2 wherein said first rake handle is shorter than said second rake handle and wherein said means 2 is disposed towards the upper end of said first handle.

9. The picking rake in claim 1 wherein said first face of said first rake head and said second face of said second rake head overlap when said first rake unit and said second rake unit are joined by said means 1, whereby the overlap increases the pick-up capacity and stability of the picking rake and whereby the overlap can provide housing for further anchoring options.
10. The picking rake in claim 9 further including
- a) a cavity on the overlapping section of the face of one of the rake heads,
 - b) a protrusion on the other overlapping section of the face of the other rake head,
 - c) wherein said protrusion is receivable inside said cavity,
- whereby the added cavity and protrusion provision further stabilizes and secures the two rake units together.
11. The picking rake in claim 1 wherein said means 1 is disposed onto contacting parts of said first rake unit and said second rake unit and is at least one selected from a group comprising
- a) gripper,
 - b) snap button,
 - c) gripper and snap button combination,
 - d) cylinder and snap button combination,
 - e) interlocking cavity and protrusion combination,
 - f) hook and loop closure
- whereby the above means allow quick and easy fastening and refastening of the two rake units while also providing a stably unified functional picking rake.
12. The picking rake in claim 1
- a) wherein said first rake handle comprises a short elongated member further including at its proximal end a first arm grip,
 - b) wherein said first arm grip further comprises at least one extension emanating from said first rake handle,

c) wherein said extension is arranged and designed to provide a first hand grip with arm leverage for the first hand of a user,

d) wherein said second rake handle comprises an elongated member of standard commercial rake length further including a second arm grip,

e) wherein said second arm grip further comprises at least one extension emanating from said second rake handle,

f) wherein said extension is arranged and designed to provide a second hand grip with arm leverage for the second hand of said user,

g) wherein said first arm grip and said second arm grip are each disposed at an appropriate height such that said user does not need to bend nor stoop when picking up material,

whereby holding said first rake unit via said first arm grip with said first hand and holding said second rake unit via said second arm grip with said second hand, the user is able to easily fasten, unfasten, and refasten the two rake units and to pick up material with little effort.

13. The picking rake of claim 12 wherein the portion of said second rake handle extending from the top of said second arm grip to the proximal end of said second rake handle is receivable inside the remaining lower section of said second rake handle by some means,

whereby the handle can be extended as needed when raking and can be retracted when picking, thereby providing a more compact and comfortable picking rake.
14. The picking rake in claim 12
 - a) wherein said first rake handle is an integral part of said first rake head,
 - b) wherein the portion of said second rake handle equivalent to that of said first rake handle is also an integral part of said second rake head,

whereby molding the rake head and the arm grip as one unit makes the picking rake easy to fabricate and assemble.
15. The handle for a rake head comprising

- a) an elongated member,
- b) wherein said elongated member is terminated at one end with an arm grip,
- c) wherein said arm grip comprises at least one extension emanating from said elongated member,
- d) wherein said extension is arranged and designed to provide a hand grip and arm leverage,
- e) wherein said elongated member is of sufficient length such that said user does not need to stoop or bend when using said handle,

whereby a pair of ordinary commercially available rake heads can each be outfitted with the above handle thereby transforming them both into a great picker-upper.

- 16. The handle in claim 15 wherein said elongated member comprises of at least two nesting tubes arranged to telescope and be fixedly adjustable by some means, whereby one handle can meet the needs of tall, medium and short users alike.
- 17. A method of deriving raking and picking up capabilities from a single functional rake comprising:
 - a) providing a functional rake that can be divided into two units wherein each unit has its own rake head with a face and its own rake handle,
 - b) providing fastening means that can easily disconnect and reconnect together said two units,
 - c) disconnecting said two units,
 - d) bringing the two rake heads substantially face to face,
 - e) swinging at least one of the units away from the other and laying the parted rake heads into a pile of material,
 - f) swinging at least one of the units towards the other until the material is snug between the two rake heads,
 - g) releasing picked material by swinging at least one of the two rake units away from the other,
 - h) reconnecting said two units,

whereby the picking up process approximates what a person would normally do with his own hands when picking up something bulky thereby accomplishing the task more efficiently.

18. The method in claim 17 further including providing for each said rake handle a handling member which the user can comfortably hold on to with each hand when disconnecting, reconnecting and picking up material.
19. The method in claim 17
 - a) wherein said disconnecting process comprises urging said handling member held by each hand outwardly,
 - a) wherein said reconnecting process comprises urging said handling member held by each hand inwardly.
20. The method in claim 17
 - a) wherein said disconnecting process comprises urging one said handling member held by one hand forward,
 - b) wherein said reconnecting process comprises urging one said handling member held by one hand backward.
21. A method of fixing the extended height of a set of telescoping tubes quasi-permanently comprising:
 - a) providing a set of telescoping tubes that can be extended and retracted without coming apart,
 - b) retaining one or more of the inner tubes inside a larger tube depending on the desired final extended height,
 - c) extending the adjusted set in (b) by pulling out the upper end of the smallest tube,
 - d) retracting the adjusted set in © by urging in the upper end of the smallest tube, whereby a user is spared of having to extend the entire set each time even when only a limited length of it is needed.

22. The method in claim 21 wherein said retaining procedure comprises:
- a) providing at least one pair of apertures going laterally through the longitudinal center of each of the telescoping tubes,
 - b) wherein said pair of apertures are disposed towards the upper ends of each of the tubes,
 - c) providing a retainer that can snugly go through said pair of apertures,
 - d) aligning the apertures on the tubes that are to be retained,
 - e) urging said retainer through the aligned apertures,
 - f) securing said retainer in place as needed.
23. The method in claim 21 wherein said retaining procedure comprises:
- a) providing at least two pairs of apertures going laterally through the longitudinal center of the second smallest and third smallest tubes,
 - b) providing at least one pair of apertures going laterally through the longitudinal center of the smallest tube,
 - c) wherein the pairs of apertures are disposed toward the lower ends of each of the tubes,
 - d) providing a retainer that can snugly go through said pair of apertures,
 - e) aligning the apertures on the tubes that are to be retained,
 - f) urging said retainer through the aligned apertures,
 - g) securing said retainer in place as needed.
24. A method of telescoping tubes comprising:
- a) providing at least two tubes wherein one tube is dimensionally receivable inside the other,
 - b) equipping each of the tubes with a pair of apertures going laterally through their longitudinal centers,
 - c) wherein the pairs of apertures are disposed toward the lower ends of each of the tubes,
 - d) providing a cross bar for each of the tubes,

- e) wherein said cross bar is snugly receivable inside said pair of apertures for each tube,
- f) wherein said cross bar is of length no lesser than the inner diameter of its respective tube and no longer than the inner diameter of the next larger tube,
- g) urging said cross bar into its respective pair of apertures,
- h) providing each a flexible cord-like member for the largest tube to the second smallest tube,
- i) wherein said flexible cord-like member is about as long as the largest tube,
- j) securing one end of a first flexible cord-like member onto the cross-bar of the smallest tube,
- k) inserting the other end of said first flexible member into the top of said second smallest tube and securing it onto the cross-bar of said second smallest tube at a point where the said first flexible member is taut when said smallest tube is at an extended position relative to said second smallest tube,
- l) securing one end of a second flexible cord-like member onto the cross-bar of said second smallest tube,
- m) inserting the other end of said second flexible cord-like member into the top of said third smallest tube and securing it onto the cross-bar of said third smallest tube and so forth,

whereby the above means of telescoping tubes is an alternative to using other means that require tooling of retaining caps that are used in most telescoping tubes today.

- 25. The picking rake in claim 4 wherein said handling member is an attachment point for said means 1.
- 26. The handle in claim 12 wherein said first arm grip further includes
 - a) another member upon which the palm of a person's first hand can rest
 - b) a hand anchoring strap thereby making the handle suitable even for persons with limited grasping abilities
 - c) wherein said second arm grip also further includes another member upon which the palm of a person's second hand can rest
 - d) wherein said second arm grip also further includes a hand anchoring strap.